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Selected US specifications from IPC sub-classes
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(54) Apparatus for playing a game

(57) A slot machine 1 on which a basic game can be played also includes apparatus which enables a further game to be played. The apparatus comprises a rotary cage 2 containing a number of balls. The container carries a transparent tube and a ball can pass between the cage and the tube under the control of a pivotal flap to appear in a window 9. The flap is operated in two rotary positions of the cage.

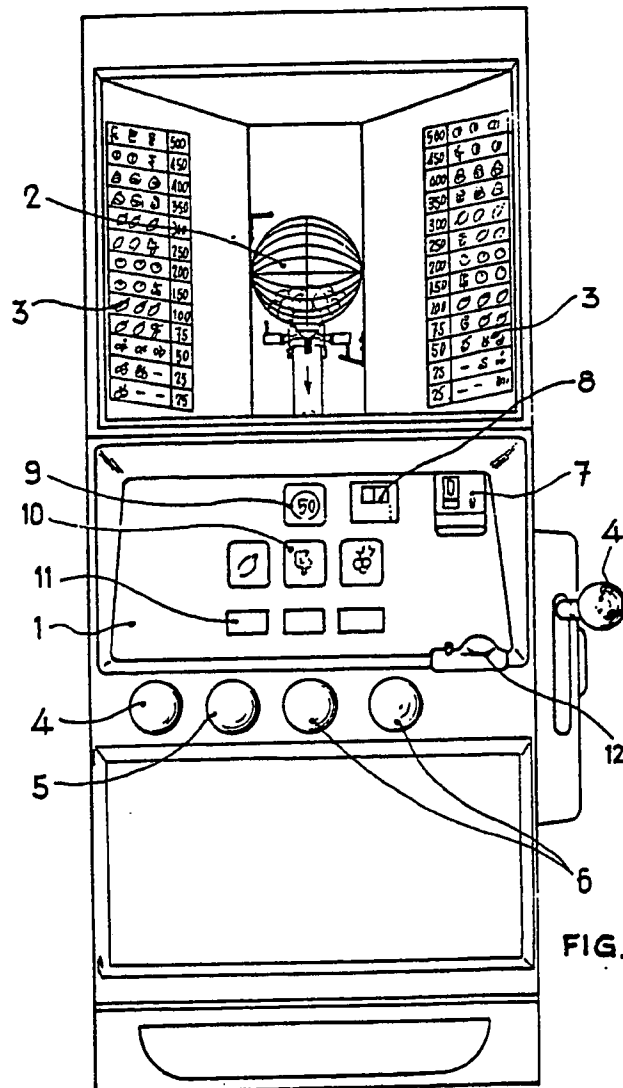


FIG. 1

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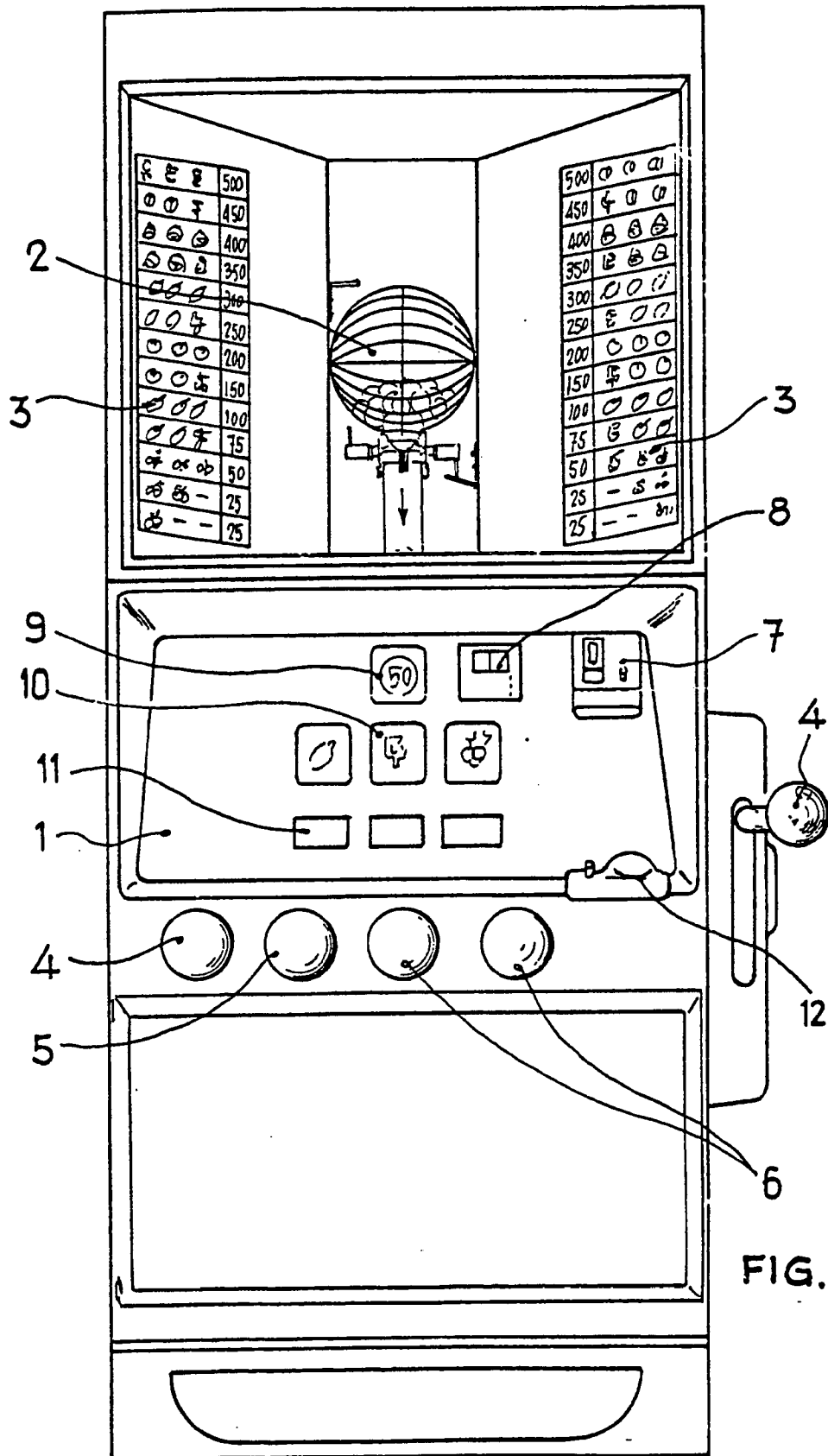


FIG. 1

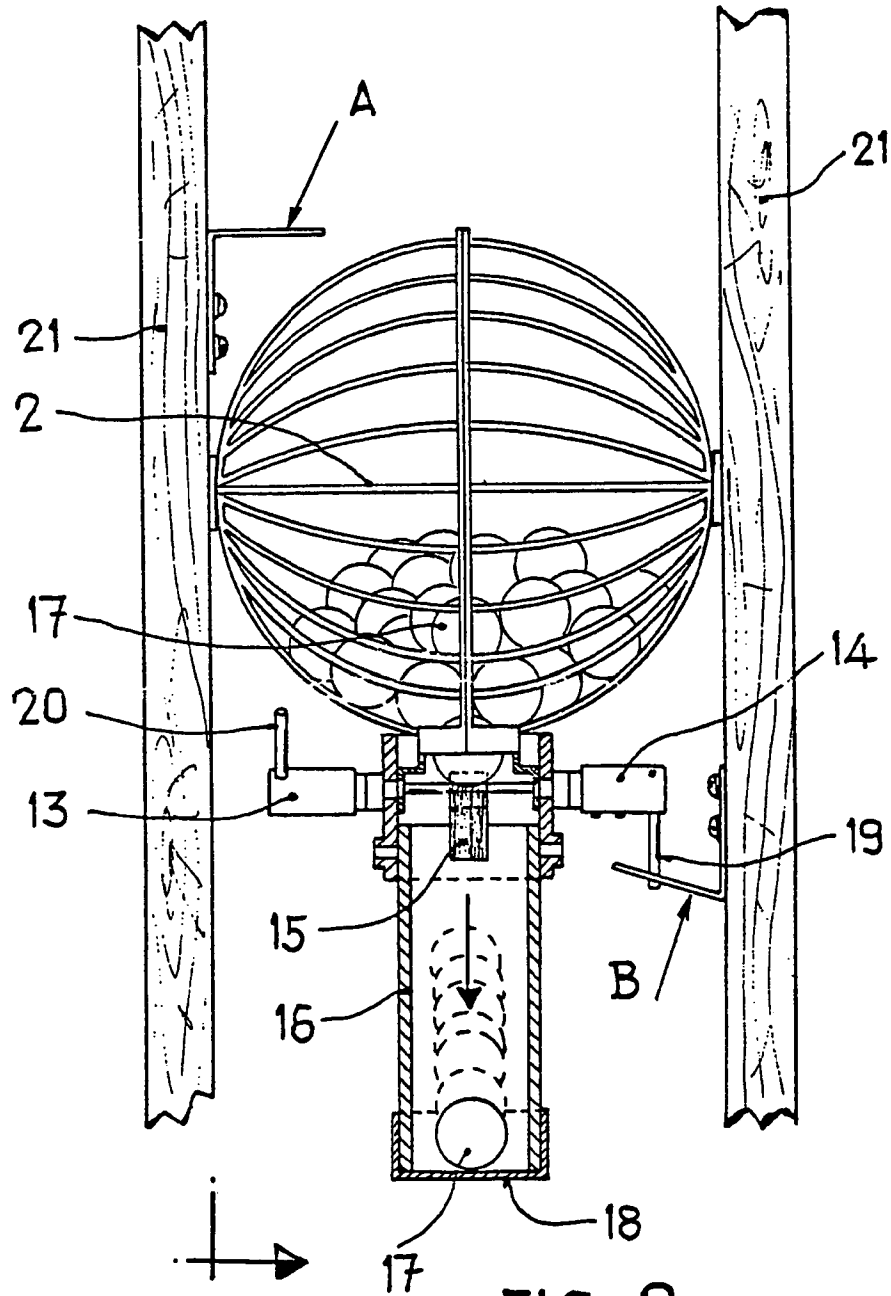


FIG. 2

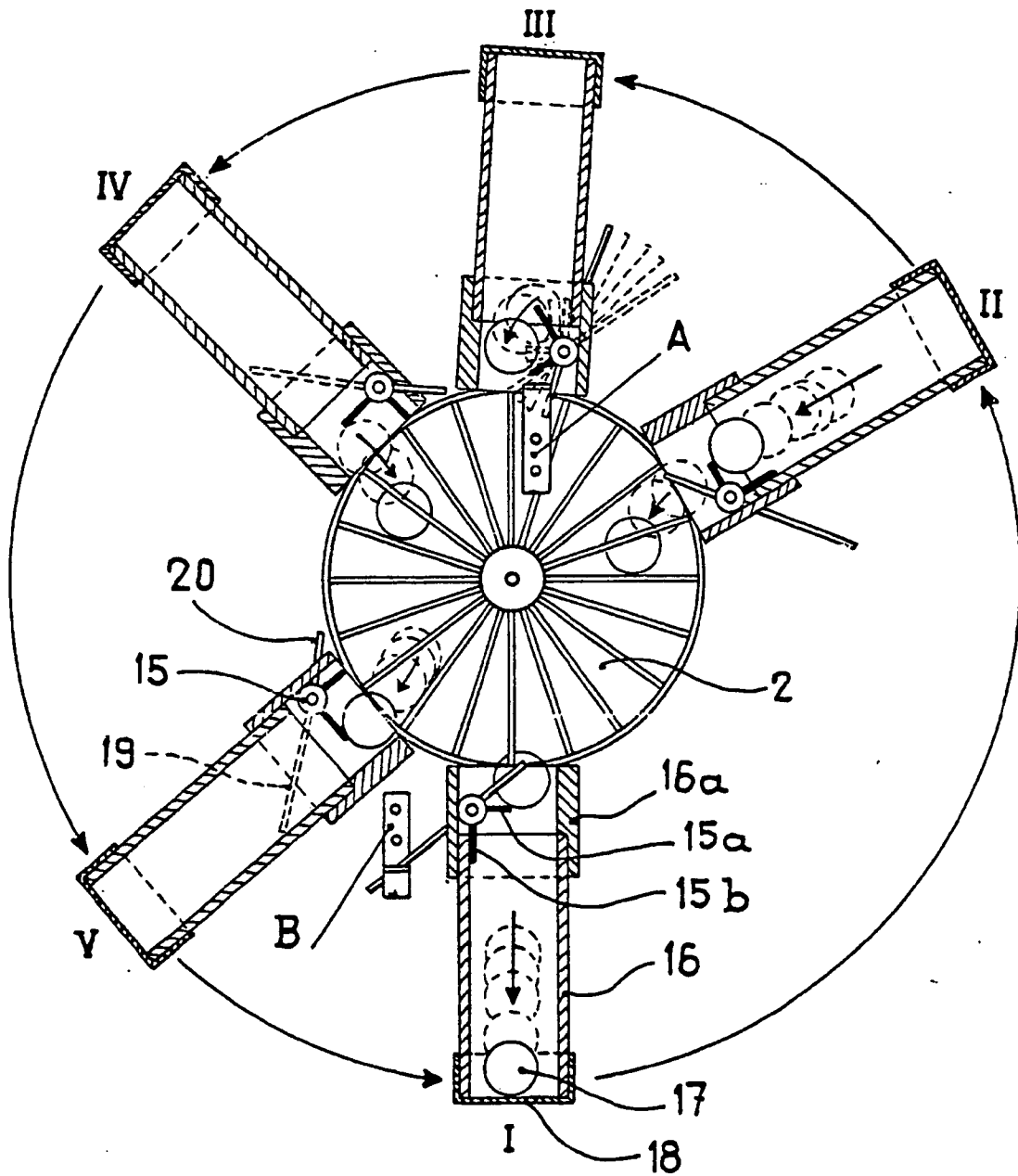


FIG. 3

APPARATUS FOR PLAYING A GAME

The invention consists of apparatus preferably designed to be attached to a slot machine, with or without a starter lever, and which makes it more attractive, rewarding persistence, and maintaining the player's interest during and at the finish of normal games.

Normally the interest of the slot machine game lies in a primary combination which, after the respective moves, appears in three aligned windows. It may or may not make up a prize-winning combination, which in turn may or may not cause the prize to fall into the respective coin compartment. There is a supplementary option of certain forward moves which allow the figure in the solitary central window to be combined and transferred to any of the aligned windows until the prize is reached, all of which is done by personally pressing certain buttons, which increases the feeling of being able to modify change by more or less successful action, already claimed in Spanish Utility Model number 270,565 by the same applicant.

However, taking into account the speed with which all these steps occur, the player may lose interest, or his attention may be distracted to the point that he gets bored and stops playing, thus foregoing the probability of winning or hitting a grand prize; for this reason, a complementary game has been contrived, linked in a way to the basic or general game of the machine, thus rewarding persistence and adding more interest to the game, getting the player more involved.

The invention achieves this effect by building a complementary game of chance into the machine. It consists of a rotating device which simulates the random extracting of a numbered ball from a drum or

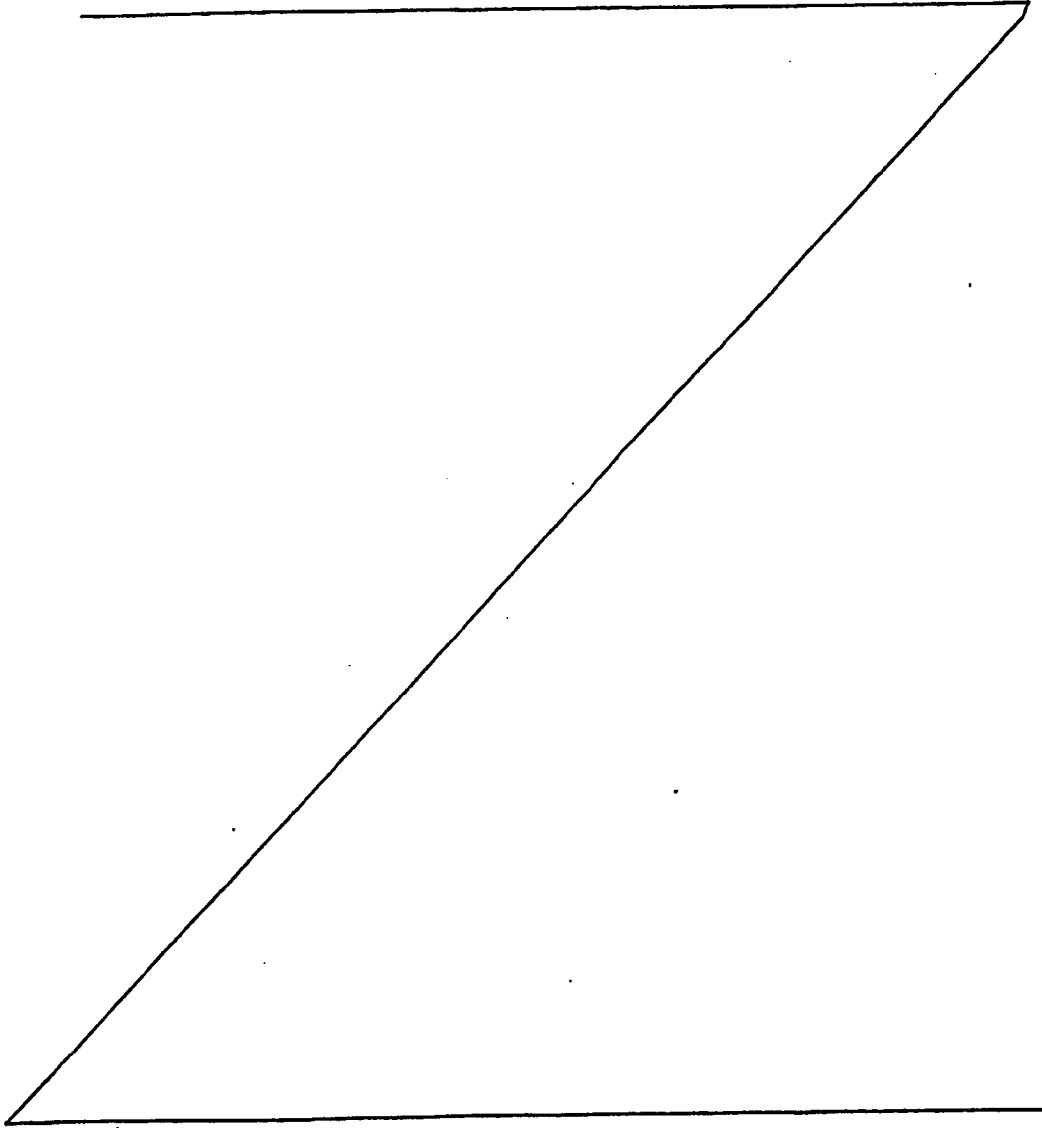
spherical cage.

There are certain games in which the attraction lies in using simulating contrivances to complement a merely electronic effect, and which allow real movements to be made. Repeating these movements fulfills a visual objective, but does not really perform any function in the game. Strict conditioning factors must, nonetheless, be complied with since the complementary game is just as important as the game itself.

According to one aspect of the invention there is provided a game for slot machines of the type which comprises a window placed in the top side of a slot machine front, under which a set of three equal windows can be seen, which cover the centre of a panel and in which capricious figures become visible, said three windows being placed correlatively above a row of three illuminated pushbuttons to make voluntary transfers of the figure appearing in the top window to any of the three windows aligned below, forcing the winning combination, according to the forward moves shown in a split window allowing other similar attempts, the game being characterized by the fact that in the event of the player not having obtained a prize in the basic game, a window and button or suitable projection, will indicate the possibility of seeking a prize in a complementary game of chance, which consists of a lottery whose numbered balls are removed from a rotating drum device; a prize ball, once removed, will be visualized in the top window which indicates numerically the consolation prize obtained, which will then fall into a tray.

According to another aspect of the invention there is provided apparatus for playing a game comprising a

rotary container for a plurality of indicator elements, an opening in the container through which an element in the container can pass to a receiver where it will be visible to a user, and means for controlling movement of the element through the opening.



In the case of using such a well-known game as the "lottery", removing the ball will have to be performed in the most realistic manner possible. This is the idea behind the device of this invention, which we are going to describe with reference to the attached drawings, showing a preferred embodiment thereof, given by way of example and not of a limiting nature.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 shows a front view of a slot machine incorporating the fundamental principles of the invention.

Figure 2 shows a front view of the device that simulates the extracting of a ball from a drum, secured by two panels of the machine to which it is attached and with a ball removed, and

Figure 3 shows a side view of the device shown in figure 2, in five successive turning positions, which complete the five operation stages.

In figure 1, which shows a front view of a slot machine to which a complementary game has been added, with the simulated removal of numbered balls from a rotating drum as in a lottery, the game front can be seen in -1- with both the starter lever and button indicated as -4-, in view of the fact that either can be used to start the game once a coin has been inserted in the slot -12-. Coins of higher value can be placed in slot -7- and the difference will remain in the machine as a credit or be returned on pressing button -5-.

When the machine starts to operate, a series of figures appears in equal aligned windows -10-. The combination has to form a winning set, programmed in the panels -3- of the top front. It is possible to make a series of transfers from the solitary window -9- to any of the windows -10- by simply pressing the button -11- corresponding to the window to be modified -10-, forcing a winning combination. In the event of being unsuccessful, despite all these facilities, including the credits shown in the split window -8- and pressing the buttons -6-, there would be a last opportunity of winning by continuing to play the complementary game. This is indicated in one of the windows -10-. By pressing the buttons -6-, you can take part in the lottery with the rotating drum -2-, participating with the prize indicated on a ball shown in window -9- which now simulates removing the ball from the rotating drum of the complementary game.

Figure 2 shows how the cage or spherical drum -2- is diametrically hinged to the panels -21- of a normal slot machine. As it rotates on these panels, moved by a small motor (not shown), there is a slight amount of friction, and the numbered balls -17- turn inside it.

On an equatorial point of this drum -2-, perpendicular to the spin axis, there is an inlet or orifice on which a coupling -16a- is fitted and secured, to which a transparent receiver tube 16 is connected, closed at its free end by a lid -18- so that the said tube -16- turns with the drum -2- following its movement. At the inlet coupling -16a-, and arranged transversally, there is a flap -15- at right angles with different sized arms -15a- and -15b-, arm -15b- being larger than -15a-. The latter covers approximately half the outlet of the balls -17-.

In the panels -21- on which the drum -2- turns, two stops A and B are placed, on both sides. Their height and separation are calculated with respect to the arms -19- and -20- integral with the flap -15- and which protrude from the coupling -16a- in diametrically opposed positions and mounted in housings -13- and -14-. The one corresponding to stop A is shorter than that of stop B. There are placed exactly in the perpendicular of the bisector of the square formed by the aforementioned flap -15-.

In figure 3 positions -I- to -V- can be seen, and the turning direction of the device; as shown in position -I-, we can see how a ball -17- has fallen, stopped by cover -18- of the transparent tube -16-, giving the impression that it has been counted. The flap -15- has the biggest branch -15b- down, and the short arm or branch -15a- closing the inlet and holding the ball which tries to fall. The drum continues to turn as the arm -19- passes stop B.

As it continues to turn, in the direction marked by the arrow, and takes position -II-, the ball -17- rests, by its own weight, on the short branch of the flap -15- underneath, whereas the ball which was resting inside falls into the drum, all of which occurs without the flap -15- moving until position -III- is reached in which the arm -19- of the flap meets the upper stop A, making the square turn 90°, putting in the ball which was resting and which, as seen in position -IV-, will fall by its own weight inside the drum -2-, leaving the long arm closing the outlet, in order to house a ball in position -V-, so that in position -I- it falls into the coupling -16-, because as rod

19 passes by stop B on the other side the drum stops turning and the square returns to its original position, it not being possible to drag two balls in this turn, due precisely to the different length of the arms or wings of the square which now puts the short arm in the pile of intermixed balls in the drum 2.

CLAIMS

1. A game for slot machines of the type which comprises a window placed in the top side of a slot machine front, under which a set of three equal windows can be seen, which cover the centre of a panel and in which capricious figures become visible, said three windows being placed correlatively above a row of three illuminated pushbuttons to make voluntary transfers of the figure appearing in the top window to any of the three windows aligned below, forcing the winning combination, according to the forward moves shown in a split window allowing other similar attempts, the game being characterized by the fact that in the event of the player not having obtained a prize in the basic game, a window and button or suitable projection, will indicate the possibility of seeking a prize in a complementary game of chance, which consists of a lottery whose numbered balls are removed from a rotating drum device; a prize ball, once removed, will be visualized in the top window which indicates numerically the consolation prize obtained, which will then fall into a tray.

2. A game according to Claim 1, characterized by the fact that the drum consists of a spherical cage resting and turning on a horizontal axis on two vertical panels of a basic slot machine and moved by a suitable motor, this cage, at an equatorial point, perpendicular to the spin axis, including a coupling whose inlet coincides with an outlet orifice for the balls contained in the spherical cage, a transparent tube being connected to the coupling and being closed at its free end by a lid or fitted opercule while in the coupling and closing the outlet, there is a flap at right angles with different branches, one longer than the other, to retain or take only one ball from

those contained in the cage, on making turns of 90°.

3. A game according to Claim 2, characterized by the fact that in the axis of the said flap at right angles, and in the projections of the coupling, outside it and on either side, there are two cylindrical heads, in which two arms are fixed, also of different length and linear projection, on both sides of each head, according to the perpendicular of the bisector of the square of the flap to which they belong, so that when the whole device turns, inside the vertical panels, these arms will first touch an upper stop on one side, which makes the flap turn 90° and later a lower stop on the opposite side, which cancels the turn and places the flap at right angles in a position to release a ball and to retain those contained inside the cage.

4. Apparatus for playing a game comprising a rotary container for a plurality of indicator elements, an opening in the container through which an element in the container can pass to a receiver where it will be visible to a user, and means for controlling movement of the element through the opening..

5. Apparatus for playing a game according to Claim 4 in which the control means is arranged to permit movement of the element between the container and the receiving section at a selected rotary position of the container.

6. Apparatus according to Claim 4 or 5 in which means is provided for operating the control means at two rotary positions of the container.

7. Apparatus according to Claim 4, 5 or 6 in which the control means is a flap device.

8. Apparatus according to Claim 7 in which the flap has two flap sections arranged at right angles.
9. Apparatus according to Claim 8 in which one of the flap sections is longer than the other.
10. Apparatus according to Claim 8 or 9 in which the flap sections are arranged at right angles.
11. Apparatus according to any of Claims 4 to 9 in which the control means is operable by rotation thereof.
12. Apparatus according to Claim 11, and where two flap sections are arranged at right angles, in which rotation is through 90°.
13. Apparatus according to Claim 11 or 12 in which rotation is effected by means of one or more arms attached to the control member.
14. Apparatus according to Claim 13 in which there are two arms.
15. Apparatus according to Claim 14 in which one arm is longer than the other.
16. Apparatus according to Claim 14 or 15 in which one arm is arranged to co-operate with one stop and the other arm is arranged to co-operate with another stop during rotation of the container.
17. Apparatus according to any of Claims 11 to 16 in which in one rotary position the control means prevents movement of an element between the container and the receiver and in the other rotary position permits movement of the element between the container and the receiver.

18. Apparatus according to any of Claims 4 to 17 in which the container is a spherical drum.
19. Apparatus according to Claim 18 in which the drum is rotatable about a diametral axis.
20. Apparatus according to any preceding claim in which the receiver is a tube extending from the container.
21. Apparatus according to any preceding claim in which the tube extends radially.
22. Apparatus according to any preceding claim in combination with a slot machine on which a different game can be played.
23. Apparatus according to Claim 22 in which the element entering the receiver will be indicated on a part of the slot machine to indicate to the user whether or not a consolation prize has been won.
24. Apparatus for playing a game constructed and arranged substantially as described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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